

Message Text

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PAGE 01 KUWAIT 02330 010853Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00
INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 SSM-05 /049 W
-----010857Z 086312 /21
R 010732Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7883

UNCLAS KUWAIT 2330

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, US, XF
SUBJECT: EDITORIAL REACTION TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S REMARKS ON
TIMING OF GENEVA CONFERENCE

1. PRES. CARTER'S REPORTED REMARK TO THE PRESS ON APRIL 26,
TO THE EFFECT THAT GENEVA CONFERENCE SHOULD BE DELAYED UNLESS
THERE IS "STRONG POSSIBILITY FOR SUBSTANTIAL ACHIEVEMENT," RECEIVED
HEADLINES IN MOST LOCAL PAPERS. ALSO, THERE WAS THE FOLLOWING
EDITORIAL REACTION FROM THREE ARABIC NEWSPAPERS, THE EDITORIAL
POLICIES OF WHICH ARE DOMINATED BY LOCAL PALESTINIANS:

A. AL RAI AL AM OF APRIL 28 CHARGED THAT PRES. CARTER HIMSELF
HOLDS THE "CARDS OF SOLUTION" OF THE MIDDLE EAST SITUATION, INCLUDING
THE TIMING OF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE, AND HE IS "TRYING TO MAKE
FOOLS OF THE ARABS" WHEN HE SUGGESTS THAT OTHER FACTORS CONTROL THE
TIMING OF THE CONFERENCE. THE EDITORIAL CONCLUDES THAT PRES. CARTER
HAS, IN EFFECT, WARNED THE PARTIES TO THE SITUATION THAT THE USG
DOES NOT WANT TO RESOLVE THE SITUATION AT ALL.

B. AL NADAF OF APRIL 28 SAID THAT WAITING FOR A GENEVA
CONFERENCE IS LIKE WAITING FOR A ROOSTER TO LAY A GOLDEN EGG,
AND THE CURRENT INDEFINITE STATE OF NO PEACE NO WAR IN THE MIDDLE
EAST IS LEADING TO CALAMITY IN THE ARAB WORLD -- THE LEBANON
CONFLICT WAS ONLY THE FIRST INTRA-ARAB QUARREL TO RESULT FROM IT.

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C. AL ANBA OF APRIL 28 CHARGED THAT PRES. CARTER "OBVIOUSLY
SEEKS TO POSTPONE" THE GENEVA CONFERENCE, AND THAT THE ARAB
(INCLUDING PALESTINIAN) ATTITUDE ON THIS QUESTION MUST BE UNIFIED
BEFORE ARAB LEADERS GO TO MEET THE PRESIDENT. THE WRITER ASSERTED
THAT CARTER ACTED WITH PRETENDED INNOCENCE WHEN HE "INVITED"
THE ARABS TO AGREE UPON THE MODE OF PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATION AT
GENEVA; THE IMPLICATION WAS THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD DARKER MOTIVES

WHEN HE EXTENDED THIS INVITATION.

2. COMMENT: WHILE INITIAL REACTION TO PRESIDENT'S
REMARKS OF CAUTION ON GENEVA CONFERENCE LOOKED LIKE
IT MIGHT DEVELOP SPATE OF CRITICISM AND SUSPICION OF
AMERICAN MOTIVES, FOLLOW-UP COMMENTARY ON THE MATTER
WAS RELATIVELY INSIGNIFICANT. THIS MAY BE REFLECTION OF
CONTINUING SCHIZOPHRENIA IN PALESTINIAN ATTITUDE TOWARD
ME PEACE CONFERENCE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, SPEECHES, PEACE TALKS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 01-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977KUWAIT02330
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770152-0890
Format: TEL
From: KUWAIT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t197705105/aaaadnpt.tel
Line Count: 72
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: fa8a6088-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07-Oct-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2337678
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EDITORIAL REACTION TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S REMARKS ON TIMING OF GENEVA CONFERENCE
TAGS: PFOR, SOPN, US, XF, KU, (CARTER, JIMMY)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/fa8a6088-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009